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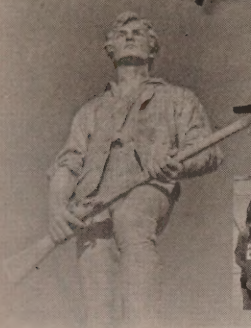


The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969

Volley for Molly
For the second year in a row, LHS shows its support for ovarian cancer research at the Volley for Molly fundraising event.
[turn to page 8]

La Vie en France
Junior Zoe Wood shares her experience living and attending school in France in the School Year Abroad program.
[turn to page 5]

Volume LII Issue I — October/November 2010

Learning Center to offer new resources

■ Nicole Sekula
Staff Writer

High school can be overwhelming at times. Tests, quizzes, and piles of homework can be difficult to manage. So when students are struggling in class, where do they go? As of late, they can now go to the Learning Center.

The Learning Center (in Rooms 146 and 148), run by Valerie Robinson and Veronica Solomon, is a place where students can go to improve their skills in the various areas of academic life. The staff teaches students of all grades skills such as reading comprehension, writing, organization, and note-taking.

Students can drop in during a study hall or free block; others are scheduled for regular visits to the Learning Center. In order for a student to be put into the Learning Center's schedule, the teacher needs to meet with the student to discuss the obstacles the student is facing in class. The teacher also needs to talk to the student's guidance counselor, who must confer with the dean to see if the Learning Center is an appropriate solution for the student.

In the Learning Center, Robinson handles the humanities, while Solomon works on math. Because the Learning Center focuses on skills, rather than material, there is a separate entity for students struggling with science (the Science Learning Program). "Science is more of a material-heavy subject," said Robinson.

The Learning Center has been years in the making.

"There [Cont. page 7]

Attendance: *New policy strives to incorporate partial credit, discourage skipping*

■ Anubhav Jain
News Editor

As school began this fall, Lexington High School students returned to find a new attendance policy that had been developed over the summer.

The new attendance policy, drafted by the Attendance Committee, was created in collaboration with the High School Leadership Team.

The Attendance Committee set about creating a new attendance policy in order to resolve problems with existing policy. One of the main issues was finding a way to motivate students to continue to go to classes for which they have already lost credit due to poor attendance.

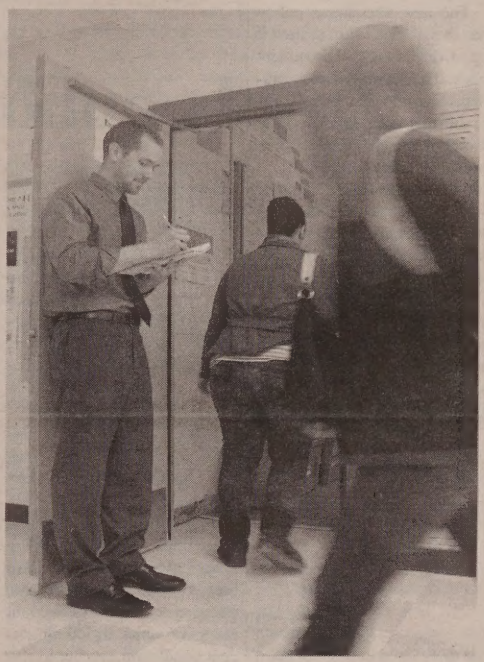
One major change was that in the old policy, any combination of seven absences, whether excused or unexcused, led to an N (three unexcused absences also led to an N). Now, any combination of five absences is grounds for an N.

"The number five sets the standard that we expect students to be present in 90 percent of their classes," said Associate Principal Laura Lasa. "This number is in line with the approximate number of times a course meets in the school year."

Another change is that two N's no longer leads to complete lack of course credit. The stipulation in the former policy forced students to retake classes. Now, once a student receives an N for half of a course, the student still gets an academic grade but with reduced credits. Thus, under the new policy, a student with poor attendance could still get an A in a year-long course, but might receive only two credits instead of four.

Originally, a student's tardiness was also factored into a student's absences, but tardiness was removed from the new policy. Teachers now make their own tardy policies.

The new [Cont. page 7]



Staff photo by Arman Bilge
Waiting in front of his classroom, English teacher Marshall Dury marks which students are on time and which are late.

Student-Faculty Senate's fundraising bill provides clubs with more equal opportunities to raise money

■ Hoda Yehia
Staff Writer

The Student-Faculty Senate is already hard at work this year – within the first month of the school year, the Senate has passed a bill.

Passed on Sept. 17, the Arts and Humanities Fundraising Access Bill will alter fundraising for student groups. The bill provides fundraising opportunities for more clubs; these fundraisers are often bake sales held in the Arts and Humanities hallway.

The bill states that each student organization can schedule no more than one fundraiser per week in the Arts and Humanities hallway, in order to "prevent excessive 'monopolizing' of fundraiser spots." In addition, clubs must schedule fundraisers between one and four weeks in advance.

Another important provision in the bill is that, in order "to promote accessibility, student organizations that have scheduled fewer prior fundraisers that year will have priority." Besides these changes, the bill upholds the current fundraising policy.

According to senior Jacquelyn O'Connor, moderator of the Senate, the bill had been in ongoing discussion in the Senate since last year. Due to a shortage of time, but no lack of support, the bill was never passed last year. "The executive board thought of it as a good way to start off the year," said O'Connor.

Yet, the bill had caused debate in the Senate. "[Senators] had different opinions on how the wording was to be phrased," said O'Connor. "We wanted to make sure not to prevent anyone from holding a bake sale."

Senior Lanbo Yang, a senator who took part in correcting and editing the bill, pointed out that before this bill, the Senate had never formally legislated on fundraising. Most clubs simply followed the informal rule, set by Dean Dave Lautman, that clubs could only fundraise one time per week.

However, the Senate found last year that certain clubs were booking numerous fundraisers up to five months in advance, preventing some student organizations from holding fundraisers.

Yang and others members of the Senate decided they had to take action and write a bill. Qin was the primary author of the bill. "We wanted it to appeal to Dean Lautman and the administration, who would have to sign off on the bill," said Yang. "And we also wanted to make it practical."

"The goal [Cont. page 7]

Mixed views on changes to N policy

■ Anish Kanesa-Thasan
Staff Writer

Many students have experienced a Monday morning when they wake up late, skip breakfast and sprint out the door with their pants on backwards and one shoe on. Being two minutes late to school on such days is understandable, and the new attendance policy has taken that into consideration.

The new attendance policy has been met with scattered approval among the student body. The reason so many students are opposed to it seems to be that they are not fully aware of the changes from the previous policy.

Many students said that they were unclear of the alterations in the policy and that the school had not prepared them fully for the switch.

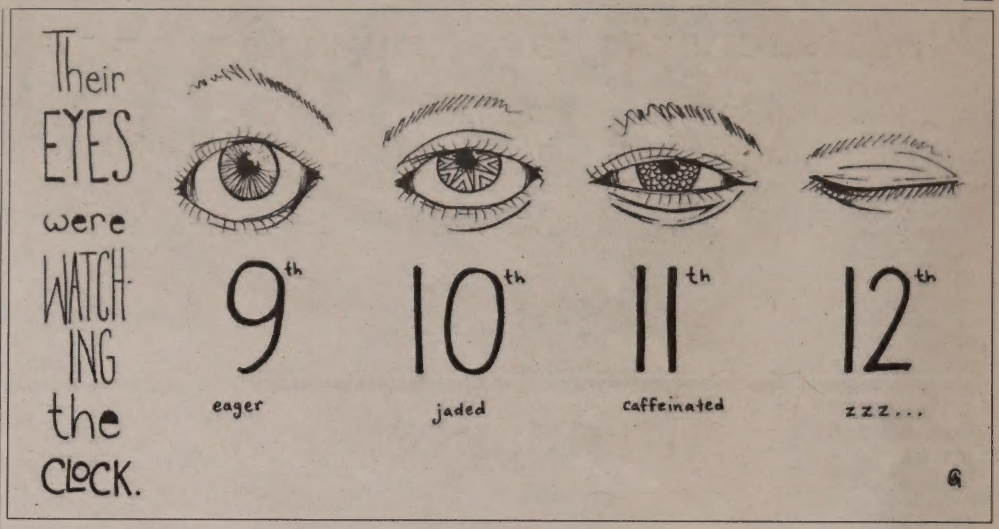
"At the beginning of every year they just give you a handbook," said Sen. Jerry Chen, a sophomore. "But they don't really tell you the things that have been changed."

Chen voiced a common opinion among students; more than half of those interviewed said that they felt they had not been properly informed of the change in attendance policy while others said that they did not understand the policy.

The new policy eliminates the issue of tardiness, which has now become a subsection of teacher classroom management.

The move is much appreciated by students.

"Some people just have really distant classes," said Will Qin, a sophomore. "I think that having the teachers decide [tardiness] can make the policy more le- [Cont. page 6]



Comic by Andrew Goulet

Is public education really free?

■ Noah Star
Op/Ed Editor

As the 2010-2011 school year commences, students at LHS look forward to a year of opportunity. Lexington High School's unique blend of extracurricular activities sets it apart from many of the other schools in the area. Students are able to discover their passions in a controlled setting and establish their own niche no matter what their interest.

In September's Boston Magazine, Lexington High School was ranked the third best school in Massachusetts. The article took into account many variables including student population, teacher to student ratio and school funding. The article found that LHS spends $15,368 per student.

While that number is a substantial amount of money, it brings forth the question, how much does a student pay to go to school?

The premise of public education is that it is free, promising an inherent equity to all students. But in the age of economic recessions, budget cuts and intense academic competition, is this mantra still true?

The American Association of School Administrators conducted a study, which surveyed 453 school officials. The study discovered that the recession is having an immense impact on schools. Specifically, "more than two-thirds cut staff in 2009-10, and 90 percent plan them in 2010-11. The same holds for benefits, affecting health care, pensions, libraries, and other educational tools and supplies."

The nationwide results that the study highlights have already been seen within Lexington High School in terms of extracurricular funding. The crowded hallway outside the auditorium every day after school is testament to the intense fundraising each club or activity participates in for survival. The Musket itself fell victim to lack of funds and has since then pleaded for money, just to publish its quota.

The effects have been school-wide. The debate team has multiple carwashes and phonathons each year, so it can finance travel to other tournaments. The French exchange, although it has a pre-existing budget, is forced to fundraise to pay for events and financial aid, to make sure any student can participate.

Lanbo Yang, a senior and co-president of the French exchange, said, "We are funding for events while the French kids are here and while doing so, we are providing financial aid for people who cannot afford it. The budget is not enough to provide these financial stipends."

The conundrum of the French exchange presents a contradiction with the "equity" of public education. Although the French exchange is a selective activity which requires payment, those who want to participate should have the opportunity, the purpose of financial aid. Yet to provide such aid, the group is forced to raise money.

The problems continue to arise throughout the school. Some classes like the Mandarin program require pupils to purchase the class textbook on their own. Within a school, free education both implies and requires that the necessary resources for learning will be free. Forcing a student to pay for the textbook necessary for their education, again forces us to question whether education truly is free.

The demand for money is not restricted to the smaller clubs and programs. Senate's recent fundraising bill reflects how every extracurricular is in desperate need of finances and grovels through bake sales and raffles. The bill regulates who has access to the main hallway for fundraising, so that all the clubs can remain buoyant.

Yet, student financial contribution is not entirely negative. It simulates a real-world environment. Hard work and financial planning are key skills for college and life beyond school.

The question remains, is public education truly free? Technically, [Cont. page 7]

A letter from the editors-in-chief

After an illustrious 40-year run, the Musket's future was jeopardized last spring. One new faculty adviser and 26 new staff members later, we are proud to offer you the first of five issues of the Musket planned for the upcoming school year. We have also added two full pages of content and switched to newsprint.

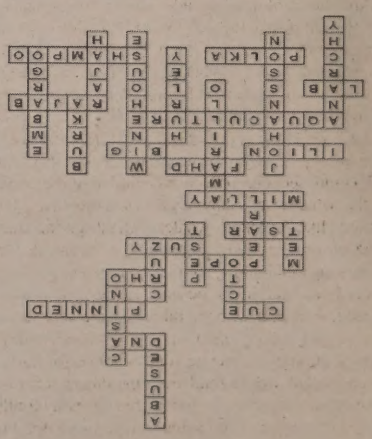
We extend a special thank you to everyone who subscribed or donated to the Musket this fall. We started the year with little money in our bank account and a seemingly impossible litany of changes we wanted to make. Thanks to you, we raised over $1,500 in subscriptions and donations alone.

LHS students also responded with enthusiasm to our call for a new staff. Our editors, writers, and photographers consistently attended two meetings a week, met their deadlines and offered innovative ideas. The Musket would be nothing without their creativity and dedication.

A student newspaper is an integral part of any high school. We are so glad that the Musket was able to survive, and we hope this issue will help you learn more about the many clubs, teachers and individual students that make LHS a diverse and exciting community.

Chris Alessandrini and Katherine Mirani, Editors-in-Chief

crossword answers -from page 6



New teachers share knowledge and experience

Jenkinson transitions to special education team

Rae Yen Tan
Staff Writer

Jeanne Jenkinson was a distinctive figure as she walked down the halls of LHS, sporting her Dunkin' Donuts mug in one hand and her black handbag and binder tucked under the other arm.

Jenkinson is a new special education teacher. She came from nearby Minuteman Regional High School, where she worked as a liaison in the special education department. She supports teachers and students in two courses: Literature and Composition I and Environmental Earth Science.

"Working with children is something I've enjoyed ever since high school years, so it seemed as though it was a natural transition," Jenkinson said, explaining her particular career choice.

"One of the remarkable things about Ms. Jenkinson is her genuine care and concern for her students," said Lisa Dahill, a colleague who has known Jenkinson for 10 years. "She has a lot of energy. At school, she's a real team player. She has a great sense of humor. I think she's been a great addition to the ILP [Intensive Learning Program]."

Even before the school year began, her dedication to her job was clear. [Cont. page 7]

Knecht is enthusiastic about teaching algebra

Ellen Meyers
Staff Writer

Many people can say that when they were kids, they knew what they wanted to be when they grew up. Sheera Knecht, however, knew what she did not want to be: a gym teacher.

"I was the slowest runner in third grade," she said, laughing at the memory, "and I hated climbing ropes."

She knew, though, that she did want to teach.

"I always liked math and understood it well," she said.

So while she will not be coaching the track team anytime soon, Knecht can take pleasure in teaching linear equations and slope-intercepts to her students.

Knecht grew up on Long Island, and went to Brown University as an engineering major. She has been an LHS parent for eight years, and her youngest daughter is currently a senior.

Before she coming to LHS, Knecht algebra and fundamental mathematics at Middlesex Community College. Last year, she worked at LHS as a special education instructional assistant. She now teaches Level 1 Algebra II to LHS freshmen.

"The [high school] freshmen are a lot more enthusiastic and open to learning," she [Cont. page 7]

Yao brings her love of teaching Mandarin

Catherine Qin
Staff Writer

Jieying Yao is new to Lexington High School this year, but her love of teaching is not.

Before coming to the United States, Yao lived in China, where she worked as a college instructor. After moving to the United States, she worked for several corporations, including AT&T and United Healthcare. She also taught on Sundays at the Newton Chinese Language School, and she has continued to do so for the past 16 years.

"People kept on telling me, 'you should be a [full-time] teacher,'" Yao said.

This led her to become a long-term substitute at Newton North High School, and with the recent economic downturn, Yao turned to full-time education. She took the necessary tests to become a certified teacher, and seeing an opening at LHS, she seized the opportunity. She is now the second Mandarin teacher at LHS, teaching Mandarin II and IV this year.

On a typical day, Yao teaches a new unit in class by starting with an engaging activity.

"I always try to find something [for these students to] relate to," she said.

Students scan through new vo- [Cont. page 7]

collegebored

So, where are you looking?

Ally Engelberg
Columnist

The night was growing old and the rest of my house was silent. Though I should have been asleep, I was instead lying on the hard kitchen floor, looking out the skylight with my friend, study buddy, and co-conspirator.

After hours of intense studying for our upcoming AP exams, we were having our first college melt-down. What if, she said, we got rejected from all our matches and reaches. What if we took a gap year and then got rejected again?

I could see our reflections in the window up above; we looked like beached whales splayed on the floor, hyperventilating and longing for our easier lives back in the ocean. I grabbed the college book (always handy, of course) and flipped through, desperate for a school that would send out a surefire acceptance letter upon receiving my application. That's when I found the University of Kansas.

The University of Kansas, lovingly known as KU, is located in Lawrence, Kansas and has a bustling population of 21,073 students. The acceptance rate is 92%. I turned to my friend. KU? I said. First college crisis averted.

A few months have passed. In May I sharpened my pencils for the AP exams and a month later I sharpened them again for finals. Then, summer flew by and I spent a whole two months gloriously free of any pencil shavings.

It's getting cold again and my pencil sharpener is back at work, but this year, the changing of the seasons symbolizes more than Halloween and Thanksgiving cranberry sauce.

It means that my calendar has been booked since September and is booked until November. It means that each day that passes is a day closer to the deadline for Early Decision to the dream school, or a supplemental essay for this school, or a portfolio for that school. It means that I [Cont. page 7]

Stress continues to be an issue for all ages at Lexington High

Divya Dharmaraj
Anisa Haque
Staff Writers

Although it's still November, students have already started to feel the stress.

The stress high school students experience differs with age. Many freshmen have reported experiencing stress due to the transition from middle school to high school. In middle school, "teams" were a reliable base of support and ensured coordination between teachers. Although freshman history and English teachers do work together, no such system truly exists in high school. Additionally, there is an increased level of responsibility in high school.

"It's so stressful sometimes," said Anindita Chanda, a freshman, "because you know that everything counts now and you need to do your best."

Still, Caitlin Go, a sophomore, is not yet feeling stressed. "This year is easier because you know what you're doing now," she said. "But you don't really know since the year just started and the work is just starting to pick up."

Junior year, stereotypically the most difficult year, means standardized testing. There is the PSAT early in the year and the SAT (both Reasoning and Subject Tests) at the end of the year. In between, some students will also take the AP exams. On top of that, the juniors have to maintain their grades and begin considering their career and college options.

> "Make a list of what you need to do, and just do it."
>
> ~Hannah Arnow, senior

Seniors, after three full years of high school stress, must juggle grades, college applications, recommendations, and extra-curricular activities, while having to make decisions that will affect the rest of their lives. According to Hannah Arnow, a senior, it is best to take senior year "one week at a time."

Excessive stress can lead to eating disorders, problems with sleeping, depression, and even obesity.

To avoid these issues, students find different ways to deal with stress: they watch television, play an instrument, listen to music, have a good laugh, chat with friends—anything except stare at an assignment in frustration. Many students find success in the strategy of completing assignments as soon as possible, planning ahead, and above all not procrastinating.

Although less frequently emphasized, stress can be beneficial, too. Stress can stimulate better performance and forces students to develop important life skills, such as organization and time management. For instance, stress has taught Arnow an effective method of handling overwhelming amounts of schoolwork: "Make a list of what you need to do, and just do it."

Stress looms throughout adult life, and high school is just the beginning. Learning to cope with stress is one of the many important skills students must master in high school in order to prepare for life in the real world.

'The Social Network' lives up to all the hype

■ Jeff Tsang
Staff Writer

"The Social Network," directed by David Fincher and based on Ben Mezrich's novel, "The Accidental Billionaires," tells the dramatic yet humorous story of the creation of Facebook.

The movie begins with student Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg) having a heated conversation with his girlfriend Erica in a local pub about Zuckerberg's desire to join one of Harvard University's exclusive final clubs.The conversation takes a turn for the worse and ends in a disastrous break-up. Zuckerberg trudges back to his dorm room, blogs a drunken rant about Erica on his Livejournal account and creates a website that compares and ranks Harvard undergraduate women.

When his controversial website gains enough popularity to crash Harvard's web servers, preppy brothers Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss and friend Divya Narendra approach Zuckerberg and propose the idea of a social networking site for Harvard students.

The three boys are members of a prestigious final club and want Zuckerberg to program the website. He accepts the job, but behind their backs, he proposes a more profitable networking idea to his friend Eduardo Saverin, initially called "The Facebook."

Saverin provides the start-up money, and Facebook begins to grow, as do the tensions between Saverin and Zuckerberg. The film shows both scenes detailing Facebook's origin and the real-time trials Zuckerberg must sit through when he is sued by Saverin, the Winklevosses and Narenda.

Overall, the movie was fast paced and well-written, and never felt forced or awkward. Every conversation keeps the movie compelling and entertaining. The actors were phenomenal, with Eisenberg embodying the role of Mark Zuckerberg with perfect awkwardness and nerdy humor. Andrew Garfield plays Saverin brilliantly, as his hold on the company and friendship with Zuckerberg deteriorate.

Ultimately, this movie has lived up to its hype and surpassed my expectations for a movie about Facebook.

LHS student band Jeffrey Terrace inspired by Dave Matthews Band, Dispatch, Radiohead

■ Sophie Harari
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Jeffrey Terrace is "like an atom," saxophonist Jonathan Katzelnik explains. Stevie Jick on vocals and guitar, Adam Kane on drums, and Gabe Orduna on bass make up the nucleus. Russell Bollag-Miller on guitars is the first electron shell, Geoffrey Genova on keyboards and Katzelnik on saxophone make up the second electron shell. The band could exist with simply the nucleus, but obtains the distinctive folksy acoustic reggae rock sound of Jeffrey Terrace only when all the parts are included.

Jick is not completely sure how the band started, but remembers jam sessions with Kane and Orduna becoming progressively more regular until they decided, "All right, I guess this is a band." Bollag-Miller says he was asked to jam with the band his sophomore year, partly in the hope that he would end up singing. Katzelnik and Genova joined about a year ago, having both played with the founding members in the LHS band.

The band played its first six-member show last summer in Jick's driveway. However, Katzelnik says that he, "doesn't really identify [Jeffrey Terrace] as a band," but that it's rather "more of a friends thing."

Indeed, the band manages to produce a chill, modest vibe whether writing songs, practicing, playing concerts, or just hanging out. According to Jick, the band has around 20 original songs and plays a few covers, mainly by influences such as Dave Matthew's Band, Dispatch, and Radiohead. Jeffrey Terrace is unique for a high school band in that the members compose the majority of their songs. Jick writes lyrics and picks chords, but the band members collaborate to create parts for themselves and improvise frequently in concert.

Katzelnik says that finding time to practice is without out a doubt the band's biggest dilemma. Jobs, school-work, sports, clubs and girls crowd the boys' schedules, so the band only has a couple of jam sessions a month. Practices are traditionally held at Jick's house on Jeffrey Terrace, hence the band's name.

The band is trying to expand to new venues, but enjoys playing gigs at surrounding farmer's markets, Trinity Church, and in various backyards, basements, and driveways. Although the concerts are attended by a very loyal and dedicated fan base, Louisa Kane said that people follow Jeffrey Terrace not only to support their friends, but also because they love the music.

"[The music is] very relaxing—a mashup between State Radio and Dave Matthews Band," she said, mentioning that "great to listen to with friends." Jeffrey Terrace concerts are such a pleasure to attend because fans "don't need to jump around to enjoy themselves," Katzel- [Cont. page 7]

staff photo by Arman Bilge

Members of the Lexington High School wind ensemble perform at one of their first concerts of the year. The concert, which took place on Oct. 10th, was held in honor of Donald J. Gillespie, for whom the auditorium is named.

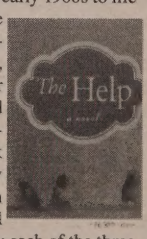
■ Abby Heingartner
Layout Editor

The Book Nook : Historical Fiction

The Help
Kathryn Stockett

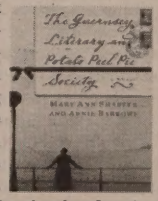
The year is 1962, and Jackson, Mississippi is a city of inequalities. On one side of town, blacks live in small houses, crowded together in run-down neighborhoods. Across the river, rich white families live in luxury and employ black maids to clean, cook, and care for their children.

Most white women do not question the injustices that their maids, or "help," experience daily. However, Skeeter Phelan, a recent college graduate, cannot help but see that separate is not equal, and wonders what it must be like to endure the life of a black maid. Her anger with the racism that surrounds her leads her to enlist the help of Aibileen, a friend's maid, in a secret project.



Although it is a work of fiction, "The Help" brings the events of the early 1960s to life through the eyes of Skeeter, Aibileen, and another black maid named Minny. The book is beautifully written, with chapters told alternately by each of the three women, whose voices are distinct and genuine. If you are interested in learning more about the civil rights movement or are just looking for a touching, eye-opening story, "The Help" is a book you won't be able to put down.

The Guernesy Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society
Mary Ann Shaffer
Annie Barrows



It is often difficult to find a book that is informative, poignant, and uplifting all at the same time, but this novel does just that. Set shortly after the end of World War II, the novel tells the story of Juliet Ashton, a writer who is trying to re-adjust to life after the war.

After Juliet receives a letter from Dawsey Adams, an inhabitant of the once Nazi-occupied British island of Guernsey, an unlikely friendship is born. Through her correspondence with Dawsey, Juliet learns about Guernsey and its unusual literary society, as well as its quirky members. Juliet is so fascinated by the stories about the islanders' hardships that she decides that the Guernsey should be the subject of her next book.

The novel's format, a compilation of letters between the various characters, keeps the plot original, fun, and suspenseful. Just as Juliet does, you will fall in love with the inhabitants of Guernsey and their idiosyncratic ways. Whether you're looking for history, romance, humor, or just a feel-good story, this is the book for you.

La vie en France: Life as a foreigner

Zoe Wood
Columnist

It's a funny thing to do, to remove yourself completely from the context of your own life. To leave behind for a year your family, your friends. To quit your sports team, your music lessons, your art classes. To say goodbye to your school for a year. To leave behind your bed for a year. To leave behind even your own language. After all, these things make up a significant part of who we are. So what is left when we leave them all behind? As it turns out, quite a lot.

I found the program School Year Abroad (SYA) by Internet. Founded in 1963, it defines itself as a "high school home-stay program." Each year, it accepts between sixty and seventy kids to study in one of six countries. I was lucky enough to be accepted into the French program and now here I am, spending my junior year in the city of Rennes, in northwest France.

The SYA France class of 2010-2011 consists of 68 students. Students are placed in a French family living in or around Rennes where they live as members of the family equal to their host siblings. Of course, you don't feel immediately integrated. Although most families are incredibly welcoming, it is easy to feel like a stranger in your own home, at first. It takes time to adapt to new routines and a willingness to deviate from old routines. Flexibility has been key, on my part as well as on the part of my host family.

Before I leave for school in the morning, my host mother forces me to consume a nonnegotiable, absolutely enormous breakfast. I was once late for school as a result. Thankfully, at school there are 60 other American students with whom to commiserate. Every day someone has another ridiculous story, a product of the omnipresent linguistic and cultural barriers. A friend unwittingly asked her family if there were any condoms in the applesauce they were [Cont. page 7]

Drama department switches the scheduling of musical and play

Araz Havan
Staff Writer

Since the creation of the Lexington High School Performing Arts department, the musical has been the biggest collaborative production of the year. Students with many diverse tastes participate, whether they are interested in acting, singing or playing music.

This year a change came to the department when the school's musical shifted seasons with the play. The musical has been moved to the spring and the play to the fall. To outsiders, such a shift may appear insignificant. Students and administrators involved in the shows however, know that it is quite the opposite.

About 25 years ago, the musical was held during the third week of March. As jazz and drama groups began to grow, the musical began to interfere with other music and theater festivals during the early spring months, and it became difficult to juggle the scheduling.

Such conflicts spurred the initial move of the musical to May. However, the continuous growth of the drama program, the play in autumn, the musical and the festivals became increasingly difficult for Steven Bogart, a drama teacher, to coordinate. So around 1996, he proposed the movement of the musical to the fall. Although such changes were intended to reduce confusion among those in the drama department, they have recently caused more trouble than they have prevented.

"What we find every year is that when we do [the musical] the week before Thanksgiving, the word doesn't get out well about what the musical is," said Jeffrey Leonard, head of the performing arts department. With so many students interested in getting involved in the musical, the insufficient publicity was a major issue.

Auditions for the musical have, in the recent past, been held during the second week of school. Many students spend these first few weeks readjusting to school, and Leonard said that auditions for the school musical are often not given top priority.

Last year, the department decided to address these problems. It decided to move the musical to the spring so that it could generate a larger interest within the school community. This allows more freshmen to learn about the musical, more students can get involved and the whole production would be able to run more smoothly.

"That's our primary reason for moving [the musical]. It's such a rush," he said, "It's crazy to do it in the fall."

This year, there will be more time for both students and administrators to prepare for the musical. Although by the spring, seniors are finished with college applications, for juniors the time is more chaotic due to AP examinations and SATs.

There are pros and cons, but Leonard said: "If it's better for the program, we'll go with what's best for the seniors."

For both productions, the switch brings up new issues but the dedicated groups of students don't mind.

Lindsay Koso, a senior involved in the fall play, said that, "[The play] is hard because it's my last year. There's so much to do."

For her and the others involved, the beginning of the year will be eventful.

"Shows are always different. It's unusual this year," said Julia Harden, a senior. "It's crazy, but it's worth it."

'Tech' makes the play possible

Tyler Vendetti
A&E Editor

Staff photo by Adam Forestall

Although Lexington High School's tech crew often stays at school late into the night in order to finish constructing the set in time for the play, their positive attitudes keep them feeling upbeat and happy.

"Leprechauns and rainbows. This is brilliant!" said Tech Crew director Emily Tillotson, who began to furiously scribble notes related to "toys," the topic of this years play, on the notepad at the front of the room.

Thoughts fly out left and right, each taken with equal consideration and acceptance. Music blasts from the miniature boom box in the corner. Smiling people flood into the room and add to the comfortable atmosphere.

This is what a typical brainstorming session looks like for Lexington High School's Technical Crew.

After receiving word about the theme of the play or musical from drama teacher Steven Bogart, "Tech Crew" immediately begins conjuring up interesting set designs on Thursday afternoons in the hidden room under the art wing.

"Usually, Bogart gives us his vision of what we should do for the set, but we get to do a lot of the designing," Tillotson said. "We definitely don't have ultimate power when it comes to making design decisions, but our ideas and input play a role in the production."

Tillotson's statement certainly rings true. From the lights hanging above the stage to the finer, intricate paint strokes on the wooden stage, Tech Crew is in charge of most of the behind-the-scenes aspects of every production.

From designing the set to constructing platforms to picking out appropriate music, by taking over the behind-the-scenes portion of the play's production, Tech Crew is responsible for how the audience perceives and views every part.

Whether a particular scene is gloomy or bright, joyful or melancholy, sadistic or pleasant is dependent on the club's members and their decisions.

"As a tech crew, it's our job to have that visual aspect," said Elaine Choi, stage manager and co-president of the group. Making sure that the visual aspect is executed properly, however, can take a lot of effort.Working into the wee hours of the night is common, as many of the Tech Crew members can attest.

"Sometimes, we have to stay here 'til 11 o'clock or later to finish things," said Tillotson.

The cluttered workspace is also an issue. With chunks of wood left over from last years function, wiggle room in the crammed chamber is scarce. A group as large as Tech is in for some hard times in such a small area.

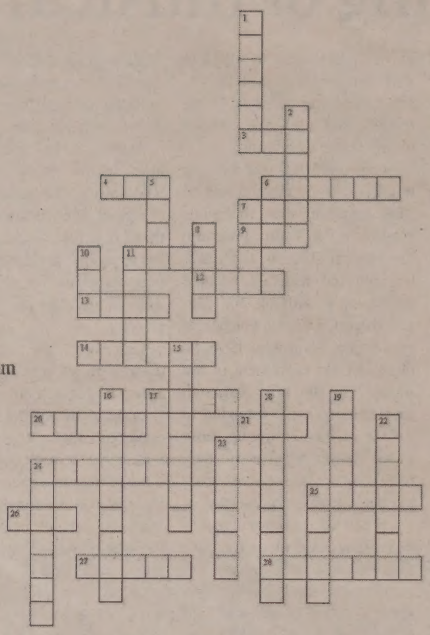
Considering the stressful working hours and tight workspaces, why would someone want to join Tech Crew at all?

Anna Parker, Tech's second director alongside Tillotson, shares her experience: "My freshman year, Emily informed me that there was a group of awesome people that make puppets after school. And I was like, 'I want to make puppets after school,' so I joined, and it ended up being amazing."

The copious amounts of food and dance parties attract crowds of new members, as well as an enthusiastic community and a sense of togetherness.

At the end of the day, the success of Tech Crew comes down to its members' dedication to creativity and their responsibility as a whole. [Cont. page 7]

Love trivia? Test your random facts smarts!

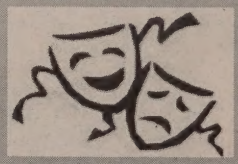


ACROSS
3 Blueprints (abbr.)
4 _____ ball
6 Fastened with a pin or staple
9 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
11 Spiritual leader
12 Johnny's neighbor
13 Emperor
14 United States poet (1892-1950)
17 Saudi Arabian king
20 Trojan War site
21 Enormous
24 Aquafarming, aka
25 The seventh month of the Moslem calendar
26 Scientific workplace
27 Type of dance
28 Cleansing agent

DOWN
1 Used improperly
2 Building for gambling and entertainment
5 Outside or outer(prefix)
7 Penelope of "Vanilla Sky"
8 Annoying person
10 Introduced
11 Oyster treasure
15 Northern Texas city
16 Actress Scarlett
18 Songstress Amy
19 All-enveloping cloak
22 Government order imposing a trade barrier
23 English actress/model/designer
24 A state of lawlessness and disorder
25 Hindu prince or king in India

For answers, see page 2

A FEW UPCOMING EVENTS TO NOTE...



Friday, November 12:	Jazz Nite 1, Commons II, 7:30 pm
Thurs.-Sat., Nov. 18-20:	Fall Play Performances, Auditorium, 8 pm
Saturday, December 4:	Fall A Cappella Jamboree, Auditorium, 7:30 pm
Thursday, December 9:	Rep Orchestra/Symphonic Band Concert, Auditorium, 7:30 pm
Thursday, December 16:	Jazz/Choral Concert, Auditorium, 7:30
Friday, December 17:	Improv Troupe Show, Blackbox Theatre, 7:30 pm

The Secret Lives of Teachers

The worst meal you've ever had?
"Stuffed cabbage with liver inside of it. My sister threw it up at the table."
Ms. Dewitt

Pepsi or Coke?
"Coke all the way, baby."
Ms. Torres

Your favorite Disney movie?
"Peter Pan"
Ms. Russell

NEW N POLICY - PAGE 2

nient."

Allowing teacher discretion seemingly resolves the issue of crossing campus to get to class on time. Many teachers, despite factoring tardiness into a student's participation grade, allow some leeway if a student is walking from a far away building. Furthermore, tardiness can no longer manifest in the form of a N, but rather the teacher determines specific consequences.

The policy has been engineered so that tardiness can only count for up to 10 percent of a student's participation grade. Thus, the policy is resistant to possible teacher biases and ensures an incentive for student attendance in class.

Another significant change in the attendance policy is the switch from seven to five total absences resulting in an N.

Such a restriction on absences is certainly fair. A student should not be granted credit for a class that he attends less than 90 percent of the time. Lessening the number of absences necessary for an N was a good move by the school.

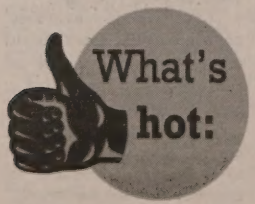
In the previous policy, two N's in a year course or one in a semester course would result in no grade showing up on a student's transcript for that course. Under the current policy, a similar number of N's will result only in a decrease in credit.

The new attendance policy is a much-needed improvement. It alleviates the severity of the previous regulations. Now, instead of retaking an entire course, a student can make up for the lost credits by taking new classes. Imagine a student receiving an A in a semester class in which he has received an N. Under the current policy, that A will have a decreased impact on that student's GPA, rather than none.

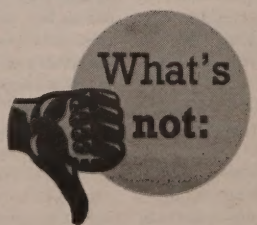
Many students, like Andrew Chang, a junior, agree.

"If students aren't getting to that many classes either by skipping or being periodically 'sick', then they haven't gone through the full course," Chang said. "As a result, I don't think they should be eligible for full credit."

Overall, the new attendance policy is a great success and eliminates many key flaws in the previous policy. Although it has been met with somewhat mixed support from the student body, as students become more familiar with the policy opposition will be lessened.



- Smartphones
- The seventh Harry Potter movie
- Doing team spirit
- Reading the Musket!



- Extensive use of "lol"
- Food left over on lunch tables
- Random fire alarms
- Oversleeping

FRANCE -- PAGE 5

sharing for dessert; she thought, understandably, that the French word *preservatif* meant preservative. It certainly does not.

I have found this story to reflect well on the general attitude I've gotten from French people about being American. Contrary to the stereotype, the French people I have met are intrigued by foreigners, eager to decode halting speech, and happy to give directions. There have been many afternoons when, after wandering through Rennes, I have found my way home only because of the directions patiently given to me by a kind stranger. Although I was not in France in the days when George W.. Bush was president, I don't hesitate to attribute the enthusiasm towards Americans to President Obama. To say that he is preferred to Bush is a colossal understatement. French people are extremely impressed with Obama and have a renewed faith in the United States.

When the American Ambassador to France visited our school a few weeks ago, he spoke to this renewed faith. It was his chief of staff Daniel Dozier, however, who made an indelible impression on us. Dozier lived here when Bush was president. The change, he said, from then to now, has been incredible. "I can be proud again," he said, "to represent the United States."

Its relationship with the United States is not the only thing changing in France. In fact, the idea of change itself is seen quite favorably by the French people, as is clear from the three traffic-stopping strikes that I have witnessed in just one month here. Much more on that next time, but now I have to go. It's breakfast time and I don't want to be late for school.

EDUCATION - PAGE 1

citizens already pay for public schools through taxes but recent years demonstrate how extra contributions are often necessary to maintain integral parts of a student's education. As the economy struggles to show signs of improvement, the situation looks dire.

The ideal solution is to increase funding for schools and keep them "free." But even in a world with infinite resources, other policies always take precedent leaving schools last on the domestic docket.

In reality, the solution is to reframe our perception of public education. Extracurriculars must remain extra, and not a common expectation. The merits of public schooling will still exist but rather than construct it as free and equitable, the only financial difference is that public schooling is less expensive.

JENKINSON -- PAGE 3

Considering how devoted Jenkinson is to her job, it might be surprising that she did not always dream of being a special education teacher.

"I was accepted to nursing school and was planning to go," she said. "During my senior year of high school, I got a job in a nursing home part-time. I loved the people, but there were things I didn't like, which made me think about a different career."

After teaching swimming during summers, Jenkinson decided that a career in teaching might suit her, and she seems to have been correct.

"Ms. Jenkinson goes above and beyond," said Dahill. "What's important with any teacher is a willingness to learn new things [...] and challenge yourselves."

ATTENDANCE - PAGE 1

attendance policy was designed to be in accordance with the school's mission statement, helping to promote good life habits.

"In my view, there is a straight line between tardiness and some portion of a grade being affected, just as there is a straight line between being late for work and losing pay," said Lasa. "It's a life skill, although I don't expect every teenager to make this connection while they're in high school."

Although the policy is meant to help students, some students oppose the new policy.

Nikki Dahan, a senior, said, "They claim to try so hard to make LHS a less stressful environment. But then they say, 'Hey if you're tardy more than three times, your grade suffers regardless of how hard you try in the class and how well you do.'"

Lasa, however, defends the policy. "Critical learning takes place in the classroom," she said, "so students need to be in class on a consistent basis. If we don't have a policy that enforces this standard, we are sending a mixed message to the students."

BAND - PAGE 4

Instead, they can just relax and think, "that's quality music and I really like it."

Being a part of Jeffrey Terrace has given been an enriching experience for all of its members. Bollag-Miller said that the band helped get him interested in singing, prompting him to join the a cappella group, Pitchpipes. Jick, who does the bulk of the vocals, said that he used to be anxious about performing, but is now content to play solo songs in concert. Likewise Katzelnik, who was initially dubious about his horn skills, now rocks every saxophone solo.

Despite having a plethora of musically talented kids, Lexington High School has very few garage bands. Every member of Jeffrey Terrace is a senior, but Jick says the band will try to stay together. Although the band is leaving the high school, the group can inspire future generations of students to start their own bands, or at least to hang out and play music. As Louisa Kane said, "they're definitely all going to come back to Lexington and jam."

YAO -- PAGE 3

cabulary hung up at the front of the room and try to think of any connection they can make to the words.

They then learn the words through written and spoken practice, as well as activities devised by Yao. These include whiteboard games, simple math problems, rhymes, skits and even Chinese Sudoku.

"I try to make in class exciting, more interactive, [and] more fun," Yao said.

This is probably the reason behind her popularity with students.

Will Chow, a senior in her Mandarin IV class, said, "She's a very nice teacher, and really understanding."

Naturally, being a native speaker of Chinese, Yao said, "I love the language and appreciate the culture."

FUNDRAISING - PAGE 1

was to target clubs that were in need, and clubs that weren't big, who needed fundraising but could not do so," said Yang. The original idea was to reserve weekly spots for these clubs to give them opportunities to fundraise. But Senate members soon realized that if these clubs failed to sign up for the reserved spots, fundraising spots would be wasted.

"The general consensus [among the Senate] is that equality between clubs needs to be enforced, and who is to say that their cause is more important?" said Yang. He believes that the bill is a proper solution, and that the four-week time limit will prove to be practical for all clubs.

Principal Cohen "thought it was a fantastic idea, and had no hesitation about it," said O'Connor. "

Yet others such as senior Michael Gants, president of Students Making a Difference, are unhappy. "It was difficult to schedule before, because people took all the dates," said Gants. "[Now] it is difficult to plan ahead."

Indeed, the outcome of the bill will only become clear in the months to come.

KNECHT-- PAGE 3

said.

Knecht's students are fond of her, too. "She is very nice and not too strict," said Sarah Zhang, a freshman. "She explains concepts very well, and if you don't understand something, she doesn't get mad and instead tries to help you."

Knecht sums up her teaching philosophy in the following piece of advice: "You should never give up if you're stuck. And don't be afraid to speak up if you don't understand something. I want to help you succeed."

LEARNING-- PAGE 1

was really no place for the average student who just needed support," said Robinson. Teachers had also indicated that such a place was needed.

Students can get help at the Learning Center for even just one area of difficulty, because as Dean David Lautman, supervisor of the program, said, "We know [that] when kids struggle, sometimes it's just one little thing." But ultimately, the Learning Center's objective is to help students develop skills they can apply everyday in the classroom.

COLLEGE - PAGE 3

spend my weekends taking standardized tests, doing interviews, or going on last minute campus tours.

For fun, we play The College Game. Rules and Regulations: 1) Take the Princeton Review college book. 2) Flip to three random schools. 3) Pick which school you would go to out of those three. 3a) If the choices are grim, you may take a gap year and reapply. 3b) Note: if you decide to take a gap year, you get one page flip and must attend this school. It's a risky game, and endlessly fun.

Some people call me crazy. They say loosen up, you'll get in somewhere. I know I should probably calm down a bit, and I know that I'll probably end up in the right place for me and damn it I know I'll get in somewhere. But that's not what matters to me right now. I'm a teenager, and today's problems are my biggest problems. So for now, I'll stress out, ponder rejection, and pace the length of my room until the decision comes back and I can finally relax.

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2010 - 2011

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Lexington High School rallies for 2nd Volley for Molly event to support ovarian cancer research

Staff photo by Adam Forestall and Anubhav Jain

Lexington HIgh School's volleyball team huddles during the second Volley for Molly event on Sept. 24 against Reading High School.

■ Jonah Bader
News Editor

At many high schools, the biggest athletic event of the year is the homecoming boys' football game, an event at which alumni, faculty and a large portion of the student body come to cheer on their team. At Lexington High School, that event seems to be Volley for Molly, the charity match of the girls' volleyball teams.

The second Volley for Molly took place on Sept. 24.

Started last year in order to honor alumna Molly Eisenberg, proceeds from the event supported the Ovations for the Cure of Ovarian Cancer. A portion of this year's proceeds was also contributed to Massachusetts General Hospital.

Eisenberg, who was the captain of the volleyball team and graduated in 2008, had been battling ovarian cancer when she died on Oct. 21, 2009.

"It meant a lot to us to see how much the school supports our cause," said Samantha Jandl, a junior. "We were playing for more than just a win or a loss."

With sales of tickets, armbands, T-shirts and concessions, this year's earnings reached $14,000, excluding corporate donations. These corporate contributions, including a hefty donation from Reebok, are expected to raise that figure to rival the $17,000 raised last year.

The event was attended by about 1,300 people. Lexington students, alumni, faculty and parents, as well as residents of several nearby towns, came to show their support. The turnout was so high that, during the varsity game, people were forced to sit in the aisles of the bleachers.

"Because of who [Eisenberg] was," Athletic Director Naomi Martin said, "this crowd is here in her memory." A doctor from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute also lauded the event, expressing the gratitude of the research community.

Lexington opened the match against Reading with a 25-15 victory in the first set. In the third set, the Minutemen were not able to hold on, as the Reading team bounced back to take the next three sets 25-18, 25-22, 25-18. Lexington's loss, however, appeared to detract little from the excitement and spirit of the event.

"[Eisenberg] was my heart and soul," said Jane Bergin, coach of the girls' varsity volleyball team. "She was just a beautiful person."

XC season 'booms' to a strong beginning

■ Dan Bernstein
Staff Writer

On a regular yellow school bus, techno beats and Cascada hits blared out the windows, radiating out of junior Mateo Palfreman's boom box, or Boomy, as the team has come to call it. The boys' cross-country team was in a mood of levity, filled with ambitions of a speedy victory and new personal bests.

"There's no pressure, just excitement," said Alan Liu, a sophomore.

When the wheels screeched to a stop, the door swung open, and the team filed out, laying their things on the grass and going off for a brief, light jog.

Coming back from warm-up, the boys huddled around team captain Sam Jones. As customary throughout this season, Jones delivers a passionate speech, speaking of the fear they instill in their opponents and their impending triumph.

"The huddle ends with a big 'Lex-ing-ton!' from the whole team" said Noah Coolidge, a junior.

Even so early in the season, the team has zoomed to a 3-1 record. They overcame Woburn early on, 19-38, and obtained an even larger victory against Watertown, 17-44. In cross-country, the team with the lowest score wins.

Jones attributes these victories to "working together as a team while we are running at meets."

Only one defeat has blemished Lexington's record, a loss to Winchester on Sept. 21, ending with a score of 28-29. This defeat was the all the more painful because Lexington traditionally beats Winchester easily, despite Winchester's huge number of runners.

On Oct. 16, the team traveled to Brown University at the annual Brown Invitational, hoping to run as well as they did in 2008, capturing second place, and not falling to fifth as they did in 2009.

Looking beyond that, the team ran against Reading, their main rival, in a dual meet with Melrose on the 19th.

"I'm really looking forward to it. Reading is Lexington's rival in almost every sport," said Douglass Luo, a junior. To him, a tough meet is not stressful, but just one more chance for the glory of showing up your rivals.

THANK YOU

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Offbeat Athlete: Rower Juliana Orlov

■ Katherine Mirani
Stephanie Yost
Staff Writers

Three hours a day. Six days a week. Up to 6,000 meters to row. Pouring rain or blistering sunshine, Juliana Orlov can spend more than 18 hours every week practicing with her crew team at Community Rowing Inc. in Brighton.

The team perfects technique and practices racing on the Charles River in preparation for weekend regattas and even international races such as the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta.

The long hours don't dampen Orlov's enthusiasm for crew, she said. In fact, the huge time commitment limits the team to only those who are truly passionate.

"Everyone on the team is really committed and really wants to be there and do well," she said in an e-mail. "There is nothing else I'd rather be doing. My parents joke that I spend more time in the boathouse than I do in my own home."

Orlov began rowing as a freshman with her older sister, she said. She loved the diligence that her teammates demonstrated, as well as the unique feeling of togetherness that comes with being on a crew team.

"There is no one super star in a boat," she said. "If one person is out of sync, the whole boat can feel it."

Being part of crew, a sport not affiliated with Lexington High School, puts Orlov in the minority among athletes at LHS. Out of all other sports, Orlov said crew was the one with which she connected.

"I played soccer when I was younger and played volleyball my freshman year, but crew was really the only sport that I found I was actually passionate and successful with," she said.

Crew has taught Orlov the values of both individual and team work, she said, a unique aspect of the sport. Because all the members of the team must be in sync, teammates rely on one other.

"At the same time, an individual must work just as hard as they expect everyone else to," Orlov said.

On the river almost every day of the week in all conditions, whether visiting other countries or competing at home, Orlov said that in the end her love of crew stems from the emphasis on dedication and perseverance over affinity.

"You don't have to be born with a natural talent," she said. "All rowers become good at the sport by training hard."